

A  
L E T T E R  
T O A  
M E M B E R  
O F  
P A R L I A M E N T,

R E L A T I N G T O

The BILL for the opening of a  
T R A D E, to and from *Persia*  
through *Russia*.

---

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. COOPER, at the *Globe* in *Pater-*  
*Noster-Row*. 1741.



L

M



per  
tlen  
into  
of  
vict



A

# LETTER

TO A

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT,  
&c.

SIR,



Was obliged with your's of the 30th past, and send you in compliance with your request, my Thoughts, in this publick manner in Answer: and though I am perswaded, that yourself, and those other Gentlemen who attended the Committee, came into the Resolution which was the foundation of bringing in this Bill, from a perfect Conviction, " That the opening of a Trade to

A

" and

“ and from *Persia* through *Russia*, will be a  
 “ great Advantage to this Kingdom, and  
 “ particularly in promoting the Consumption  
 “ of the Woollen Manufactures thereof.”

Yet I cannot, from any thing that appears to me, bring myself to be of this Opinion : On the contrary, I am fully convinced, that the opening of this Trade, will be so far from promoting the Consumption of the Woollen Manufactures of this Kingdom, that it will be a very great Discouragement to the Exportation of them to those Countries to which they are now exported; and this, without making the Nation in any degree Amends, by the Exportation of its Woollen Manufactures to *Persia* through *Russia*.

This I conceive myself fully warranted in saying, from Papers which I had put into my Hands near two Months ago, and have been since laid before your House ; for besides it's appearing that some Passages in the Paper B, are contrary to other Passages in it, it also appears by every one of these Papers, “ that this  
 “ Trade will at all Times be at the Pleasure  
 “ of Two very great Powers, both at a very  
 “ great Distance from this Kingdom. That  
 “ the Privileges and Regulations declared in  
 “ Paper A, necessary for carrying it on, are not  
 “ obtained from the Government of *Russia*;  
 “ and also by Paper B, that the Duties to be  
 “ paid in *Persia* are not settled; and that the  
 “ opening



“ this Trade will be the Loss of the Exportation of the Tin, Lead, the Woollen, and other the Manufactures of this Kingdom to *Turkey*, and occasion a large Importation of *Persia* Raw-Silk into this Kingdom purchased only with Money.”

This appeared to me on first reading these Papers, and immediately brought into my Mind an Observation made many Years ago, “ That the Councils of a Country are always inquisitive after Truth, but, to hide it from them, and to perplex Things which have Relation to Trade, is the Interest of so many, that, in the greatest Deliberations, wise Men are often misled by such as in all their Actings consult more their private Profit than the Publick Welfare.”

I am persuaded, not any one of the Gentlemen, who appeared before the Committee, consult more their private Profit than the Publick Welfare on this Occasion, no not even either of the Two Gentlemen whose Partners in *Petersburgh* write to them to encourage their Principals, to send so large Cargoes as to the Amount, the one of 25,000 *l.* and the other of 10,000 *l.* proper for the *Persian* Market; but this I cannot persuade myself, with regard to those Persons, who prepared the two Papers marked A and B, which were put into the Hands of Mr *Finch*, his Majesty's Minister at the Court of *Russia*, and by him

transmitted to one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State : For if ever there was a Paper calculated to mislead, and prepared with a View to private Profit more than the Publick Welfare, or ever had the Marks of a Romantic Performance, it is the Paper marked B.

This clearly appears to me from a Number of Passages in it, some of which in the Course of this Letter, I shall take the Liberty of laying before you ; and, had the Lords for Trade and Plantations seen Paper B in the Light in which it appears to me, I am very confident their Lordships would not have made any Report upon this and the other Papers referred to them, without having been first attended by the principal Traders to the *Levant*, as well as the principal Traders to *Russia*, who it is probable might have as strongly declared to their Lordships, “ That the great  
“ and many Disadvantages, which would ac-  
“ crue to this Kingdom, by this new Chan-  
“ nel of Trade, appeared to them so mani-  
“ fest, that they humbly conceived the Pro-  
“ posal deserved the utmost Attention, be-  
“ fore it was permitted to be carried into ex-  
“ ecution.”

If their Lordships, who are Superintendants of the Trade of this Kingdom, and who by their Commission, “ are required to in-  
“ form themselves relating to its Trade, and  
“ the

“ the promoting and encouraging thereof ;  
 “ and particularly directed to send for Per-  
 “ sons for their better Information in any  
 “ Matters under their Consideration ;”—had  
 taken a Step, which appears to me so neces-  
 sary to have been taken on so important an  
 Article of Commerce,—I cannot help think-  
 ing, but that both yourself and other Gentle-  
 men would have been much better, than you  
 have yet been, informed of the Advantages or  
 Disadvantages which may attend *Great Bri-  
 tain* from this new Channel of Trade. And  
 I am in your Judgment, whether the Lords  
 of Trade themselves, by having heard all other  
 the Parties concerned, besides the Parties on-  
 ly immediately interested, would not have  
 had a much better Foundation for repre-  
 senting to his Majesty, “ That it appeared to  
 “ them, that the Scheme for opening a new  
 “ Branch of Trade to *Persia* through  
 “ *Russia* may be very beneficial, and may  
 “ deserve his Majesty’s Royal Protection.”

The Lords of Trade, in their Report to  
 his Majesty, are pleased to call Captain *Elton’s*  
 Scheme for opening this Trade, “ a new  
 “ Branch of Trade to *Persia*,” which I take  
 it their Lordships were induced to from sever-  
 al Passages in Paper B, particularly a Passage  
 running in these Words: “ It seems to ap-  
 “ pear from what hath been above observed,  
 “ that the Trade that may be so easily car-  
 “ ried

“ ried on *in futuro* from *London* to *Mesched* and  
 “ the *Bucharías*, would be an entirely new  
 “ Branch of Trade, and may shortly become  
 “ a most important one ; that it may be en-  
 “ tered on by the *British Russian* Merchants  
 “ with the greatest Prospect of Advantage, and  
 “ may be vastly extended ; and that this Trade  
 “ they can never be supplanted in, so long  
 “ as they can secure a Passage for their Goods  
 “ through the Empire of *Russia*, and a Free-  
 “ dom of Navigation on the *Caspian*, both  
 “ which it will ever be the Interest of the  
 “ Sovereign of *Russia* to grant the *British*  
 “ Subjects.”

I doubt not, Sir, but you will be pleased  
 to observe, that all the Advantages so strongly  
 painted to attend the Nation by the open-  
 ing of a Trade to *Persia* through *Russia*,  
 will entirely depend on a secure Passage  
 through the Empire of *Russia*, and the  
 Freedom of Navigation on the *Caspian* Sea ;  
 ——— and though this may be a new  
 Channel of Trade to *Persia* ; yet, that it  
 will not be a new Branch of Trade to that  
 Empire, will appear, besides many others,  
 from the following Paragraphs in the Report  
 of the Lords of Trade, and Paper B. *viz.*

“ That Captain *Elton's* Papers contain a  
 “ Proposal to the *Russia* Company for supply-  
 “ ing *Mesched*, the present Capital of *Persia*,  
 “ and

“ and the Countries adjacent, with all Sorts  
 “ of Woollen Goods, to a far greater Degree,  
 “ and at much easier Rates than they are  
 “ now carried there, and for vesting our Re-  
 “ turns to *Great Britain* in the best Raw  
 “ Silks, and other Commodities produced in  
 “ those Countries, near 50 *per Cent.* cheaper  
 “ than at present by the Way of *Turkey*.

“ That the Charge of bringing Raw Silk  
 “ from *Persia* to *Petersburgh* will be very in-  
 “ considerable, in proportion to the Land-  
 “ Carriage from *Gilan* in *Persia* to *Aleppo*  
 “ or *Smyrna*, the only two Ports in *Turkey*  
 “ for Exportation to *England*.

“ That the Sophy of *Persia*, from an In-  
 “ clination to distress the *Turks*, his natural  
 “ Enemies, and to favour the *Russians*, may  
 “ possibly prohibit all Trade into *Turkey*,  
 “ provided he can have a sufficient Demand  
 “ for his Silk through *Russia*.

“ That the *Persians* who have a settled  
 “ Aversion for the *Turks*, are too well in-  
 “ formed of the Advantage the *Turkish* Em-  
 “ pire derives from being the principal Mar-  
 “ ket for *Persian* Silks, and this is what they  
 “ have been endeavouring to prevent for up-  
 “ wards of an Hundred Years past. They  
 “ are likewise well apprized, that the only  
 “ Way to succeed in this Design is to encou-  
 “ rage the *British* Merchants to come and  
 “ settle in *Gilan*, by which Means they hope,

in



“ in Time, to divert the Channel of Trade  
 “ for *Gilan* Silks, which now runs through  
 “ the *Turkish* Dominions, and make it cur-  
 “ rent through the Empire of *Russia*. Could  
 “ this be once effected, it would not only be  
 “ a singular Advantage both to the Empires  
 “ of *Russia* and *Persia*, with regard to their  
 “ Trade; but it would not fail of considera-  
 “ bly distressing the *Turk*, who is the com-  
 “ mon Enemy of both those Empires.

“ That if the *Turks* and *Turkish Armeni-*  
 “ *ans* shall be continued to be denied the Ex-  
 “ portation of *Gilan* Silks by the Way of  
 “ *Turkey*, or be obliged to purchase them  
 “ upon such unequal Terms, we can hope  
 “ for little or no Silk from the *Turkey Com-*  
 “ *pany*, or else they can't afford to sell what  
 “ they import into *Great Britain* but at a  
 “ very extravagant Price, which is a Cir-  
 “ cumstance which ought to have its Weight,  
 “ should the *British Russia* Merchants meet  
 “ with any Opposition on their importing  
 “ *Persia* Silk into *Great Britain*, from ei-  
 “ ther the *Turkey* or any other Company.”

These are Proofs produced by the *Russia*  
 Traders themselves, that the opening of a  
 Trade to and from *Persia* through *Russia*,  
 will not give a new Branch of Trade to this  
 Kingdom, but will only take away from it  
 the whole, or a Share of that Traffic which  
 is now carried on by the *Turkey* Merchants

to



ing imported into this Kingdom by the Way of *Turkey*, and necessarily make the City of *Petersburgh* the only Mart in *Europe* for *Persian* Raw Silk: And then it may be concluded, that as any Person who pleases, may be free of the *Russia* Company for five Pounds, every Silkman in *London*, and every Weaver in the *Suburbs*, will purchase his Freedom, and import Silk from thence, as they now do from *Piedmont*, and other Parts of *Italy*; and pay for the same by Bill of Exchange, in like Manner as they now pay for the Raw Silks they import from such Countries, which must be such an Addition to the Balance of Trade with *Russia*, so great against this Nation already, that it will be impossible for its long continuing to pay, when it shall have lost so great a Branch of its Trade to *Turkey*, with Woollen Cloth, and other the Manufactures of this Kingdom, in Exchange for Raw Silk.

This, Sir, is a Matter very well deserving the Attention of yourself, and every Person of any Rank or Condition in this Kingdom, who may have any Estate in Land; since by a Trade so carried on, all the *Persian* Silk wanted for the carrying on the Silken Manufacture of this Kingdom may be imported into it, and not one Piece of Cloth sent to purchase Silk, or given in Return for Silk: And as this Channel of Trade is strongly

C

asserted

asserted by the *Russia* Traders to be the cheapest Way of coming at *Persia* Raw Silk, it must infallibly, in a very little Time, prevail over, and exclude that Channel, by which it has been so long brought into this Kingdom.

But these are Inconveniencies that can never attend the Nation, by continuing the Trade for *Persian* Silk in the Channel it is now in; since *Persia* Silk, imported by the Way of *Turkey*, can only be in Return for Lead, Tin, the Woollen, and other the Manufactures of this Kingdom, there being no Exchange between *Great Britain*, and any Part of the Dominions of the *Grand Seignior*: And it may deserve Consideration, that the *Turkish* Empire doth not produce Commodities proper for the *British* Market, sufficient to invest the Produce of the Goods sent thither. Therefore, if *Persian* Silk, which has hitherto come through *Turkey*, in Return for Cloth, shall, any Time hereafter, be brought through *Russia*, the Traders to the *Levant* will be reduced at all Events, to the Necessity of exporting so much less Cloth, as was used to be taken in Barter for *Persia* Silk. But it is much to be feared, that the Loss of so considerable a Branch of Trade, may be the Consequence of losing some other Branches now enjoyed by

by the *British* Subjects to the *Turkish* Dominions; through which, as *Persia* Silk has been brought for a very long Course of Time, great Advantages have arisen to the *Grand Seignior*, as well as his Subjects; and should this Channel of Trade be diverted by the sole Means of the Legislature of *Great Britain*, from passing through the *Turkish* Dominions, and given to the *Russian* Government; it is more than probable, our great, and only Rivals in the *Turkey* Trade will readily lay hold of the Opportunity of making Advantage of it, to the Prejudice of the Subjects of *Great Britain*,—by procuring either to have the *Turkey Merchants* present Privileges curtailed, or to have their own Privileges enlarged; either of which would be the entire Ruin of the whole Trade which is now carried on from this Kingdom to *Turkey*.

I wish, Sir, those Gentlemen, who you tell me so zealously solicit the passing this Bill, would be so kind as to inform your House, how *Great Britain* is to be made amends, or what Security the Nation is to have for the Loss of a Trade of such infinite Concern to every Man in the Kingdom, from the *Prince* to the Parish-Poor; and though I am not able, for want of Materials at this Place, to send you a Computation, for a

*Medium* of Years, either of late Years, or at any former Time, what the Nation would suffer by this Loss of it's Traffick to *Turkey*; yet I can pleasure you with an Observation made by Mr *Martin*, who was a few years ago Inspector-General of the Customs; and tho' the Advantages accruing to the Nation by the *Turkey* Trade, may be computed by Mr. *Martin* much higher than they really were; yet I am persuaded you will agree with me, that as well the *Turkey* Trade must be a very beneficial one, as that the Observation itself is a very masterly one;——it runs in these Words: “ The last Out-set for *Turkey* “ was above the Value of 700,000*l.* and at “ least Six Seventh Parts of that Value was “ the Price given for *English* Labour: Now “ as the poor working People of both Sex- “ es, great and small, are annually subsist- “ ed for about Six Pounds a Head, at a *Me- “ dium*; it is plain, that 100,000 People “ must have been subsisted a whole Year “ by the Preparation of that Out-set. A- “ gain, our Returns from *Turkey* are gene- “ rally Raw Silks, and Grogram Yarns; and “ that they may be sufficient to answer “ the Cost of the Out-set, the Freight, In- “ surance, and Customs, the Commission “ and other Charges; and, at last, a rea- “ sonable Profit to the Merchant, I should “ think, they ought to be of the Value of “ at

“ at least a Million and half. The next  
 “ Enquiry therefore should be, how much  
 “ Labour is bestowed upon these Returns ;  
 “ and for this I have had the Curiosity to  
 “ weigh a Pound of the cheapest manufa-  
 “ ctured Silk, which yet was of three times  
 “ the Price that was given for it Raw, when  
 “ it was first sold at the *English* Market.  
 “ If the Returns are, as I have fancied,  
 “ of the Value of One Million and a  
 “ Half ; and if they generally increase to  
 “ treble their Value by the *English* Manu-  
 “ facture ; and if they employ as many  
 “ cheap Hands in Proportion as the Out-set,  
 “ it would follow, that Three Millions, or  
 “ five Times 600,000 given for the Manu-  
 “ facture of the Returns, must employ five  
 “ Times as many People as the Out-set. A  
 “ *Turkey* Fleet is fitted out but once every  
 “ two Years ; yet even so, upon the former  
 “ Supposition, 300,000 People are annually  
 “ employed by that Trade ; and conse-  
 “ quently, by the Loss of it, must be de-  
 “ prived of their annual Subsistence, and  
 “ must come to the Parish for a Mainte-  
 “ nance.”

I am aware it will be objected, “ that I  
 “ have been fighting in the Dark ; for it is  
 “ intended by the Bill, that Care shall be  
 “ taken, that all the Raw Silk imported  
 “ from *Petersburgh*, shall be in Return for the  
 “ Product



“ Product and Manufactures of this Kingdom actually sent through *Russia* to *Persia*.” I will not say how impossible it will be to frame a Law, which can answer the Purport intended by it ; how impracticable it must be to carry such a Law into Execution ; or how contrary any such Law will be to the Genius of a trading People ; however sensible I am, such Laws have passed in the Times of our Ancestors, and may be found in the Statute Books ; but at such Times, the Natives of this Kingdom were in a manner entirely Strangers, not only to Traffick, but even to Manufacture ; consequently not versed in any of the many Arts and Frauds, which have been long practised by some or one of the Traders in all Parts of the commercial World. Nor will I in the least question the Sincerity of the *Russia* Traders, constantly residing in this Kingdom, in proposing to have this Point settled by Oath ; for I am willing to believe, that they have no other Thought *at this Time*, than the carrying on their Traffick to *Persia* through *Russia* with the Product and Manufactures of this Kingdom ; and that they are perfectly candid, not only in the Offer of such Oath, but also in what they informed the Lords of Trade ; “ that this Branch of Trade, will consist principally in the Exports of Woollen Goods, and Importation of Raw Silks.”

But,



But, Sir, I am free to declare, that they are led into this Way of thinking from the Information they have had from those Gentlemen, who were the Framers of Paper B, and by contemplating this most extraordinary Performance, and giving too easy Credit to the many remarkable Passages in it, such as, *First*, “ That not only the serving the Capital City of *Persia*, with Woollen Goods and *European* Commodities, is the principal Motive that should determine the *British* Merchants to establish the principal Mart at *Mesched*, but the happy Situation of the City to supply all the Demands of both *Bucharias*, the Kingdoms of *Tonquet*, and *Thibet*, and those Tracts of Land that border on them, with the many great and populous Cities in them; nay, even the uncultivated Lands, which contain some Millions of People to whom *European* Commodities are in the highest Esteem, and on which Side an advantageous Trade might be almost infinitely extended, of which Trade the *British* Merchants may possess themselves whenever they please, for it only remains for them to send their Goods (partly by Land and partly by Water) to *Astracan*, and from thence cross the *Caspian*, and so by Land to *Mesched*. *Secondly*, That were it necessary, it might be easily proved, that at  
 “ *Mesched*,

“ *Mefched*, and the *Bucharías*, Woollen  
 “ Goods would bear a much better Price  
 “ than in the *Ruffian* Empire, and greater  
 “ Profit would enfue on their Returns: For  
 “ they would fell all their Goods for ready  
 “ Money. — *Thirdly*, That *Mefched*, ftands  
 “ fo advantageoufly, with regard to the Pro-  
 “ vinces of *Gillan*, *Sherwan*, and *Arrask*,  
 “ from whence the *Britifh* Merchants might  
 “ bring for Goods fold at *Mefched*, in Raw  
 “ Silk, to the amount almoft of any Sum.  
 “ — *Fourthly*, That, when the *Britifh*  
 “ Merchants come to be acquainted with  
 “ the *Bucharías*, and thofe Cities to the  
 “ *Eaftward*, they will find other Commo-  
 “ dities there, as Gold, precious Stones,  
 “ Bezoar, Musk, and the like, to invest  
 “ their Returns in, fhould not the produce  
 “ of the *Northern* Provinces of *Persia* prove  
 “ fufficient. — And, *Fifthly*, That there  
 “ is no other Part of the known World to  
 “ which it is poffible to ftroke out a new  
 “ Branch of Trade, that can in the leaft vie  
 “ with the Advantages this Trade promifes  
 “ both to Silk, and Woollen Manufactures  
 “ of *Great Britain*; it would create a vaft  
 “ additional Confumption of our Woollen  
 “ Manufactures, for which Returns may be  
 “ made in Gold, Raw Silk, Cotton, fine  
 “ Wool, Silk-Yarn, and other manufactur’d  
 “ Commodities.” Thefe Paflages, and the  
 Information

Information they have had from those Gentlemen who framed Paper B, must certainly have led the *Russia* Merchants to think as they do upon this Occasion, more especially if they are fully satisfied of the Truth of what is advanced in Paper B, viz. " That in *Russia* " the prices of their Commodities are beat " down, or *Russia* Merchants may import " them from *Great Britain* themselves, and " that the *British* Merchants are likewise " obliged to give long Credit there, which " not only robs them of part of their Profit, " but subjects them annually to contract bad " Debts for no small Sum," which Assertion it appears they must admit, by so readily grasping at a Trade in which they are told, if they will enter in earnest upon it, they will find their Account more than in the Trade they now carry on to *Petersburgh*, and in which they will sell all their Goods for ready Money.

I believe, Sir, you must have observed, that there is nothing more common in Conversation than for Gentlemen, not from any Knowledge in Commerce, unless what they have gained by reading Books of Travels, and Voyages, to set forth, in very strong Terms, *the many, great, and manifold Advantages, which would accrue to Great Britain, by a Trade being carried on to such and such distant Countries, with the Woollen and other Manufactures of this Kingdom ; and, how easily Re-*

turns may be made, in Gold, and Silver, Jewels, and other precious Stones, with Commodities of almost all Species proper for European Markets; — but those, who are conversant with the Commercial World, are too sensible, that, however easily our Woollen and other Manufactures may be sent to these Countries, yet, when they are arrived there, it is not so very easy to dispose of them; or, even when they are sold, to procure either Gold, Silver, or other Commodities, in return for them, at least Commodities proper for *European* Markets, or such as will answer the bringing to this or any other Market in *Europe*. — He, who can believe, that, by opening a Trade through *Russia* to *Persia*, *Great Britain* will be enabled to supply “ both the *Bucharias*, the “ Kingdoms of *Tonquet*, and *Thibet*, and “ those Tracts of Land bordering on them, “ with the many great and popular Cities in “ them, and the uncultivated Lands in them “ which contain some Millions of People, “ with the Woollen Manufactures of this “ Kingdom,” or that (should the Traders of this Kingdom be so weak as to send any great Quantities of these Manufactures thither) the Inhabitants of these Countries will be capable to pay for them either in Gold, Silver, or any other Commodities. He, I say, who is capable of believing this,

this, may be capable of believing any thing, however so *romantic* or *incredible*, and must be but little acquainted with the State of *Great Britain*, where still it may be with Truth affirmed, the body of the Inhabitants are not only much better fed, but also much better cloathed, than the People of any other Country in the World, and yet how few of them wear Cloth, either the best, or even so high as the middling Sort or any of the Sortments of Cloth, which can be afforded to be sent as Merchandize to such distant Countries! — Now, if the People of *Great Britain*, who are *Free*, and what they procure by their Labour can call *their own*, are not capable of wearing the middling Cloth made in this Kingdom; how, is it possible to believe, that *Millions* of Persons who from the Nature and Constitution of their Government are *Slaves*, and who have *no Property* which they can assuredly call *their own*, — can bear the Expence of wearing Cloth sent through such a great Tract of Country as from *Great Britain* to *Persia*, and that too mostly by Land!

But, Sir, if great Tracts of Country will give great Branches of Trade to a Nation, I very much admire, that, at the same Time this Proposal was sent from *Petersburgh*, why another was not sent likewise, setting forth



the great Advantages of supplying with our Woollen Manufactures, so great a Tract of Country as the *Russian* Empire, or that a Proposal was not offered for supplying *Crim Tartary*, on its being conquered by the *Russians*; for as the greatest part of the *Russian* Dominions are much nearer to this Kingdom than *Persia*, so it might be reasonably supposed, from the Money yearly paid them by us, and other Nations in Balance of Dealings with them, that they are equally or more capable of taking off our Manufactures than the *Persians*. — But as the body of the People of *Russia* are, notwithstanding this great Balance in their Favour, unable to purchase Foreign Manufactures even for wearables, by reason of the low price of their Labour and general Poverty; so, for the same Reason, the *Persians*, and the Inhabitants of those Countries adjoining to *Persia*, will be ever incapable of doing it. — And, indeed, what Traffick can be expected, either with a People so uncivilized, and so unaccustomed to Labour; or with Regions mostly inhabited by *Tartars*, and *Cossacks*, who are continually preying upon each other, as well as their Neighbours? Or, who can expect the People of a Country, whose Profit by Labour is not *Four-pence* a Day, can purchase the Manufactures of a Country, whose Natives gain *five Times and more* that Sum a Day? Or, that there  
can



can be any so considerable a Consumption of our Manufactures, as is represented in Paper B, in such Lands where *Labour* is so vastly cheaper than in this Kingdom, where the Generality of the People are so poor and miserable, where there are so few Commodities either proper for the Markets of *Europe*, or not prohibited from coming into *Great Britain*; and where so great a Part of unwrought Commodities fit for such Markets, are worked up, through *mere Necessity*, into Manufactures, either for the common Uses of their own People, or for Sale to Foreigners. Therefore, as the Consumption of Woollen Goods in such distant Countries, can only be made by the *Great Ones*, and very few other of the Inhabitants, and, as I have already observed, very little Part of the Cloth carried into *Persia* through *Turkey*, is consumed in the Provinces where Silk is produced; and as it is chiefly in the great Cities that Cloth is to be seen, either on the Backs of the *Persians* themselves, or their Horses; and, as the *Persian*, *Armenian*, and other Merchants, who buy Cloth of the *British* Factors in *Turkey*, sell it at the great Cities in their Way, and before they come to the Provinces producing Silk.—I am persuaded, there will not be any considerable Quantity of the Woollen, and other Manufactures of  
this

this Kingdom, annually sent through *Russia* to *Persia*; but, on the contrary, that very great Quantities of Raw Silk, and other *Persian* Commodities, will be annually brought from *Persia* to *Petersburgh*, and imported from thence into this Kingdom.

Therefore, Sir, I conceive it may deserve particular Attention, whether an Oath on this Occasion, is not too slender a Thread to hold those who may become Traders, however it may bind those who are already Traders to *Russia*; but it is not from either, that my Apprehension is grounded, that there will be a large Importation of *Persia* Raw Silk from *Russia*, purchased with Money, and not in Exchange for the Woollen and other Manufactures. But,

*First*, Because, notwithstanding the many Advantages set forth in Paper B, to accrue to *Great Britain* by the opening of a Trade, by the *British* Merchants, to and from *Persia* through *Russia*, there is a Passage in it which runs in these Words; “ The  
 “ Trade across the *Caspian*, from *London* to  
 “ *Mesched* might, in the Course of a few  
 “ Years, be made as considerable a Branch  
 “ of Trade, with regard to the Consump-  
 “ tion of our Woollen Manufactures, as  
 “ any we now enjoy.” This is an Admission, either that the Consumption of our Woollen Cloth, will not be very considerable  
 to

to *Persia*; or that the Exportations of our Woollen Cloths are very considerable to *Turkey*; if the latter, it is an Admission that entirely makes against the *Russia* Company, who so zealously labour to lessen the Exportation of Cloth to *Turkey*, which yet is the best and greatest Market for this Manufacture of any, either in *Europe*, *Asia*, *Africa*, or *America*.

*Secondly*, Because in the fourth Article of the Treaty of Commerce concluded at *Petersburgh*, the 4th of *Dec.* 1734, between the Crowns of *Great Britain* and *Russia*, by which it is agreed, " That the Subjects of  
 " *Great Britain* may import by Sea or by  
 " Land, into any and all the Parts of *Russia*,  
 " where the Subjects of any other Nation  
 " are allowed to come, all Sorts of Goods  
 " and Merchandize, the Trade and Importation whereof are not prohibited ;—as  
 " likewise the Merchandizes of the Product  
 " or Manufacture of *Asia*, provided the  
 " same be not actually prohibited by any  
 " Law now in Force in *Great Britain*."—  
 It is declared, " That the *Russia* Merchants  
 " shall enjoy the same Liberty and Privilege  
 " of Trade in *England*, as are granted to the  
 " *English* Merchants of the *Russia* Company,  
 " provided that nothing in this Permission  
 " be contrary to the Laws of each Country."  
*Thirdly*,

*Thirdly*, Because, notwithstanding, in the eighth Article of the said Treaty it is agreed,  
 “ that the Subjects of *Great Britain* may im-  
 “ port all Sorts of Goods and Merchandize in-  
 “ to *Russia*, and transport them through *Russia*  
 “ into *Persia*, by the shortest and easiest  
 “ Way, paying 3 *per Cent.* in Rix-Dollars, *ad*  
 “ *valorem*, for the Duty and Transit thereof.  
 “ And likewise, that they may bring all Sorts  
 “ of Goods and Merchandizes from *Persia*  
 “ and transport the same through *Russia*, up-  
 “ on paying 3 *per Cent.* only, in Rix-Dollars,  
 “ *ad valorem*, for the Duty and Transit there-  
 “ of.—Yet, by the 29th Article it appears,  
 “ that the said Treaty is only to last for the  
 “ Space of fifteen Years, to be computed  
 “ from the Day of it's being signed ; unless  
 “ the contracting Parties shall agree to re-  
 “ new or prolong it before it expires.”

*Fourthly*, Because however, there may be a Liberty granted by the said Treaty of Commerce, to trade to *Persia* thro' *Russia* ; yet there is not, at least to my Knowledge, any Treaty concluded between *Great Britain* and *Russia*, whereby it is stipulated, that the Subjects of *Great Britain* shall, either in Perpetuity, or for any Number of Years, or even so much as one Year, be the only Traders, not only to *Persia* through *Russia* with Woollen Goods,

Goods, but also from *Persia* through *Russia* with Raw Silk.

*Fifthly*, Because, as the Subjects of all other Nations will have equally the Liberty of trading to and from *Persia* through *Russia*, they will be the better enabled to rival the *British* Subjects in the Silk Trade, when once proper Carriages and Embarkations are provided, for the introducing the *British* Manufactures into *Persia*, as the bringing of Silk from *Persia* to *Petersburgh*, will necessarily be much easier and safer.

*Sixthly*, Because, as the opening this Trade will, if there be any Truth in what the *Russia* Merchants assert, cause the Trade now carried on to *Persia* through *Turkey*, to be carried on to *Persia* through *Russia*, it must occasion not only the Decrease of the Exportation of Cloth to *Turkey*, and of Raw Silks from *Turkey*; but also the Importation of greater Quantities of Silk from *Russia* into this Kingdom.

Therefore, Sir, for these Reasons, I cannot think that any Oath can be framed, or any Law made by the Legislature, that can assure to *Great Britain*, when once the Channel of Trade shall be altered, that its Cloth shall be sent to *Persia* through *Russia*, and there exchanged for Raw Silk, brought to *Petersburgh*, and from thence imported into this Kingdom; or that any Traffick

E

can



can possibly be carried on by the *British* Merchants, to and from *Persia* through *Russia*, which can make the Nation, in any degree, amends, for the Loss of its present Commerce to the Dominions of the *Grand Seignior*:— And am fully convinced, in a few Years after the opening of this Trade, unless *Great Britain* contents herself to permit *Persian* Raw Silk to be imported from *Petersburgh*, without insisting on such Silk being the Return of its own Manufactures carried to *Persia*, that it's Silk Manufacture will be found to be generally interrupted, and daily decreasing.

I shall be extremely affected, Sir, whenever this happens; because a general Interruption, and a daily Decrease in the Silken Manufacture must, in a very sensible manner, affect the Woollen Cloth-manufacture of *Great Britain*, which has at all times, since its Erection in this Kingdom, been thought the *great Basis* of our Foreign Trade, and the *first Spring* of our Dealings abroad; and is a Manufacture, which, by its Consumption at home, as well as Exportation, gives the greatest Employment to the Poor of this Nation; as being the Foundation, in great Measure, of the Employment they have had, for about Seventy Years past in the Silken Manufacture; the whole Price of the Increase of which, (admitting



mitting our Manufacture, and native Product is only given in Exchange, for the Raw and Thrown Silks imported from *Turkey*, *Italy*, and the *East-Indies*,) from the Worm to the Mercer's Shop, is paid to the Product of our Lands, and Labour of our People.

But, Sir, however the whole Price of the Silken Manufacture, from the Worm to the Mercer's Shop, is paid to the Product of our Land, and the Labour of our People ; when Raw Silk is only exchanged for the Woollen and other Manufactures ; yet this will not be the Case, when, by means of this Bill, and the monopolizing of *Persia* Raw Silk at *Petersburgh*, *Great Britain* shall be reduced to the unhappy Necessity of having, either its Silken Manufacture partly stand still, or of purchasing the *Persian* Raw Silk it may want with Money, and probably at exorbitant Prices.—Therefore, I freely own, I shall be much more affected at any Misfortune attending the Woollen Manufacture than the Silken ; unless the Foundation of the latter continues to be, as it is at present in the *Turkey* Trade, the Exchange of Woollen Goods for Raw Silk ; because the *Woollen Manufacture* is entirely the Produce of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* ; and the first Material of the Silken not so, but a Manufacture only made beneficial to this Kingdom, by its first Material being purchased

with the Product, the Woollen, and other the Mannfactures of *Great Britain*.

This, Sir, brings me to observe, that, however it may be the Concern of *Great Britain* to work up its Manufactures cheap, as well as to have Freight cheap, in order to the sending them, on easy Terms, to foreign Markets; yet it is not so much the Concern of the Nation, what Price it may give for Raw Silk in foreign Countries, provided it be given in Exchange for its Product and Manufactures; nor what Price Raw Silk bears in this Kingdom, unless it occasions our manufacturing so dear, as to prevent us from having a foreign Exportation.—And therefore, should the opening this Trade bring us never so many more Bales of Silk, unless such Silk is taken in Exchange for the Woollen and other Manufactures of this Kingdom, and not purchased with Money, this will not be of any Advantage to the Nation, even provided it was a true Assertion in Paper B, “ that this Commodity may be imported into *Great Britain*, by this Trade, “ full Fifty *per Cent.* cheaper than by the “ *Turkey Company*,” which indeed is a Declaration, without the Framers of that Paper having any Experience in, or Knowledge of, the Trade carried through *Turkey* to *Persia*, and absolutely as *romantic*, as any other  
Parts

Parts of the same Paper ; and probably made with a Design of imposing upon the Credulous, as well as of inducing the *Russia* Merchants to engage in this Traffick, whereby to procure for themselves Posts of Honour and Profit ; which I am led to imagine, from the Conclusion of Paper B, which runs in these Words ; “ The *British* Merchants must  
 “ likewise establish a House at *Mesched*, one  
 “ Branch of which should reside at *Reschd*,  
 “ and the Chief be invested with the Title  
 “ of Consul to the King, and Agent to the  
 “ Company : Such a Character given to the  
 “ Chief of their House, will have great  
 “ Weight with the *Persians*, and firmly establish the Affairs of the new Undertakers.”

But admitting this Commodity could be imported into this Kingdom, full Fifty *per Cent.* cheaper, by the *Russia*, than by the *Turkey* Company ; this would indeed be an Advantage to the Persons immediately interested in such Silk, but of little Consideration to the Nation ; unless the Persons importing it, sold it at a proportionable Price to the Manufactures of this Kingdom ; and by such means it should be the Cause of lowering the Price of all other the Raw Silk imported from *Turkey*, the *East-Indies*, *Italy*, and other Countries ; and that this lowering the Price of all Sorts of Silk, should occasion a greater  
 Exportation

Exportation of the Silken Manufactures of this Kingdom to foreign Countries not under the Government of *Great Britain*. But I do not expect any such Advantages will be given the Nation by any Traders whatsoever. It would be acting contrary to the known Practice of Traders, who always endeavour to make the most, as indeed they have a Right to do, of the respective Commodities they import; the Price of which is always governed, by the Plenty, or Scarcity at Market, in Proportion to the Demand; and not what may be their Cost in any foreign Countries, or what Charges may be upon them, either in such Countries in which they may be purchased; or in this Kingdom, upon, or after, their Importation into it.

This I was led to observe from a Passage in your Letter “ not only relating to the “ *Russia* Merchants being able to import Silk, “ cheaper by Fifty *per Cent.* than the *Turkey* “ Merchants, but also relating to the great “ Difference in the Charges of carrying our “ Woollen Goods through *Turkey* to *Persia*, “ and from *Persia* to the *British* Factories in “ *Turkey*, to what there will be in carrying “ such Goods, through *Russia* to *Persia*, and “ from *Persia* to *Petersburgh*.” I own myself perfectly un-informed, with respect to the giving any certain Satisfaction on this Article; however, have no Notion that one  
can

can be so much greater than the other, when I consider the Conveyance of Goods, now thro' one Province by Land, then embarking them on Vessels, and afterwards re-imbarking them, now passing them by Land again, then embarking them again on the *Caspian*, and finally re-imbarking them, and carrying them to the different Marts in *Persia*;—together with the Expence of housing these Goods, and of *Quarentines*.—All which must be very great Risques run by the *Russia* Traders, (besides the Risque to and from *Petersburgh*) if the Cloth thus sent to, and the Silk thus brought from, *Persia* through *Russia*, shall be all this Time all their own Property, and are such Risques as will require a very considerable Profit; and are not run by the *Turkey* Merchants, who run no Risque after the Arrival of their Goods at the *Turkish* Ports; nor of the Silk they take in Exchange for such Goods, until they are housed at the respective Factories, and shipped for this Kingdom: And as the *Armenian*, *Persian*, and other Merchants, who take from the *Turkey* Merchants Factors, Cloth in Barter for Silk, notwithstanding the Charges, find their Account in continuing this Traffick; and that the *Persia* Raw Silk is not governed, in this Kingdom, by the Cost abroad, but wholly by the Prices of other Raw Silk; and that the Prices of all  
Sorts



Sorts of Raw Silk are governed by the Demand, in proportion to the Quantity at Market: Therefore, the Charges of trafficking in these Countries can only be said, to concern those who are the Traders in and to such Countries.—But that *Persia* Raw Silk will not be imported into this Kingdom, full Fifty *per Cent.* cheaper, by the *Russia* Traders, than the *Turkey* Merchants, I dare promise myself, you will be fully convinced, (unless carrying great Quantities of Goods to a Country, be the certain Way of selling them dearer; and taking great Quantities of Commodities from a Country, be the Certainty of buying them cheaper,) from two Passages in Paper B, which run in these Words:

“ It is not to be questioned, when these  
 “ Cities shall be once well informed, that  
 “ *European* Goods can be had at *Mesched*, in  
 “ such Plenty, as the *British* Merchants  
 “ may, in time, import them thither; and  
 “ that at the same Time, they shall find a  
 “ greater Demand for their own *Commodi-*  
 “ *ties*; but these Caravans must soon be-  
 “ come more rich and numerous.

“ Thus, because *Great Britain* can supply  
 “ them with *Woollen Goods* in such *Plen-*  
 “ *ty*, and at so easy a Rate; and at the  
 “ same Time, afford to give a better Price  
 “ for

“ for their Raw Silk, and other Commodities.”

I am very sensible, Sir, of what you tell me, “ That the *Turkey* Trade is represented “ to be a very inconsiderable Trade at this “ Time.” — Now supposing that this Trade, which so much Pains is taken to have believed by the Members of both Houses of Parliament, is not so considerable at this Time, as it was before the *French* were at Leisure, or had Stocks, and Encouragement given by their Government, not only to improve their Woollen Manufactures, but to enlarge their Traffick to the *Grand Seignior's* Dominions, as well as to many other Parts of the World. — Is this to be assigned as a Reason for destroying it Root and Branch; for the Sake of one Set of Merchants, to the Prejudice of another; to the Advantage of the Government of *Russia*, and to the great Loss of the Government of the *Grand Seignior* ?

But, Sir, if the *Turkey* Trade be an inconsiderable Branch, with respect to the taking off our Woollen Cloth, (for that is the true State of the Question) I should be glad to be informed, What other Branch of Trade is a more considerable one? — However, I am apt to believe, you will not think this Trade so very inconsiderable a Trade, when you are informed, that, besides other Com-

F

modities,

modities, the Growth of *Turkey* and *Persia*, there are expected in the Ships which are now loading in the Ports of *Turkey*, upwards of 1600 Bales of Silk, the Value of which only is near 300,000 *l.* in Return for Lead, Tin, Woollen Cloths, and other the Manufactures of *Great Britain*. This cannot possibly be esteemed an inconsiderable national Trade ; on the contrary, it must be esteemed a very considerable one, as well as a most advantageous one to *Great Britain* ; especially, if the Calculation, which was made some Years ago, by a Gentleman who was many Years a Commissioner of Trade, be a just one; *viz.* “ That 100 Cloths sent  
 “ to *Turkey*, purchased such a Quantity of  
 “ Silk, as that the manufacturing, &c. of  
 “ the said Cloth, with the manufacturing,  
 “ &c. of the Silk brought in Return, paid  
 “ 5000 *l.* to the Subsistence of our own  
 “ People.”——Because, upon the Foot of such Calculation, the manufacturing, &c. of the Cloth which purchased these 1600 Bales of Silk ; and the manufacturing, &c. of the Silk itself, will pay upwards of 700,000 *l.* to the Subsistence of the People of *Great Britain*. Therefore, I am very sure, it is a Trade that ought to be the Care of yourself, and every other landed Gentleman in *Great Britain* ; and that you will think it is of such infinite Advantage to this Kingdom,  
 that

that it deserves the Favour and Protection of the Government, and all possible Encouragement from the Legislature, at all Times, and upon all Occasions; and am ready to flatter myself, that, when Gentlemen shall have given themselves Time to consider, they will not risque the losing of a *Trade*, which is so very valuable to the Nation; and at the same Time, a *Trade* that may be so greatly increased, provided it shall meet with any the least Encouragement from a House of Commons; and this in bare Expectation only, of gaining a Traffick, which is but a Traffick *in Embryo*; and by all that has yet appeared, may be entirely precarious; and a Trade from which *Great Britain* (if the Projectors themselves are to be believed) will not bring any greater Advantages to it, than it now enjoys from the Commerce carried on to *Turkey* with Lead, Tin, Woollen, and other Manufactures of this Kingdom, in Exchange for Raw Silk, and other un-manufactured Commodities.

You will be pleased, Sir, to observe, that I have hitherto only been arguing, on a Supposition, that the carrying on a Trade, to and from *Persia* through *Russia*, will be, as the Traders to *Russia* assert, “ entirely practicable, and much the cheapest Way of conveying our Woollen, and other Goods to *Persia*, in Exchange of Raw Silk from

“ thence;”—which Argument I was induced to discuss from the first Part of your Letter:—But having finished what I thought proper to trouble you with, in regard to the Danger, which I apprehend *Great Britain* will be in, should this Bill pass into a Law, of losing the whole Branch of its Trade to *Turkey*. I shall now proceed to answer the second Paragraph of your Letter, in order to which I beg leave to observe,

*First*, That not any of the Privileges and Regulations, declared absolutely necessary in Paper A, for the carrying on this Trade, are obtained from the Government of *Russia*, not even those relating to the Navigation; although in one Part of Paper B it is declared, “ That for the Reasons too tedious to mention, the Success of this Trade does solely depend, on the *British* Merchants having their own Vessels to navigate the *Volga* and *Caspian*.” And in another Part, “ that without having their own Vessels, it will be absolutely impossible for the *British* Merchants to carry on their Trade to *Mesched*, or even to *Gilan*.”

*Secondly*, That the Rates to be paid for Carriage through *Russia*, are not settled, otherwise than that in the eighth Article of the Treaty abovementioned, it is declared, “ That the *English* Merchants shall be obliged  
“ to



“ to enter into an Agreement with the *Russian*  
 “ Merchants, for the Charge of transporting  
 “ such Goods, either by Land or Water ;  
 “ and make them a reasonable Allowance  
 “ for the same.” Which Words seem a plain  
 Indication, that the *Russian* Government are  
 determined to keep the Navigation on the  
*Volga* and *Caspian*, as well as the Carriage  
 by Land, to themselves.

*Thirdly*, That there is not any Agreement  
 made by, or in behalf of, the Subjects of  
*Great Britain*, what Duties shall be paid,  
 either on the Importation of our Woollen,  
 and other Manufactures into *Persia* ; or on  
 the Exportation of Raw Silk, and other  
 Commodities from *Persia*, more than a De-  
 claration from a Son of the present *Sophy*,  
*viz.* “ That no more than the usual Duties  
 “ shall be demanded,” without specifying  
 what those Duties are, and this not con-  
 firmed by Treaty, or otherwise ; but only  
 made to one, or more *Englishmen*, who came  
 from *Russia* to *Persia*.—Therefore such a  
 Declaration cannot be looked upon by those  
 who are acquainted with the absolute Pow-  
 er of *Eastern* Monarchs, and the Rapacious-  
 ness of their Governors, to be any Security  
 for the *British* Subjects, either to settle in, or  
 carry on a Trade to and from, such Countries.

*Fourthly*, That it appears by Paper B,  
 “ That Captain *Elton* left *Resched*, on his Re-  
 “ turn

“ turn to *Astracan*, about the middle of *August*, 1739; that it was the middle of *November* following, before he reached *Astracan*; having had the tedious Passage of a Month cross the *Caspian*, although that Sea is not 170 *English Miles* in Length; and that being detained two Months in *Quarentine*, it was the latter End of *January*, before he arrived at *Petersburgh*, after a Voyage from *Resched* to *Petersburgh* of six months, and of one near as long in going thither.”—Now, if this Journey through *Russia* to *Persia*, as well as back again, was so tedious to a single Person, it is submitted what it must be with Carriages heavily laden!

*Fifthly*, That, as it is declared “ absolutely impossible for the *British* Merchants to carry on this Trade, without having their own Vessels on the *Volga* and *Caspian*; and such Vessels commanded by a Native of *Great Britain*, and navigated with Half *British*, and half *Russ* Seamen :” This must of course breed Discontents and Differences, between the Natives of *Russia*, and the *British* Subjects, employed in navigating, and passing those Seas, consequently bring great Inconveniences to the Traffick to and from *Persia* through *Russia*; and at the same Time, probably may occasion a Jealousy in the *Persians*, of the Subjects of *Great Britain*, as they

they have been always jealous of any Foreigners navigating the *Caspian* Sea.

*Sixthly*, That though it is declared, “ That “ the *British* Subjects can never be supplanted in this Trade ;” yet it is admitted at the same Time, “ that this is only, so long “ as they have a secure Passage through the “ *Russian* Dominions, and a Freedom of “ Navigation on the *Caspian* Sea ;” and as to this Security or Freedom, they have no better Assurance of it’s being either granted or continued, than at the Pleasure, or as it may suit the Interest, of the Sovereign of *Russia*.

I cannot think, Sir, but that these Observations, with others I have occasionally dropt in some former Parts of this Letter, will shew, “ that every thing necessary for the carrying “ on a Trade to and from *Persia* through *Russia*, “ is not adjusted, either between the “ Crowns of *Great Britain* and *Russia*, or between the Crowns of *Great Britain* and “ *Persia* ; and that it will not be either so very practicable or secure a Trade, either at “ first, or at all Times hereafter, as you are “ pleased to tell me you have Assurances from “ some Gentlemen, who have given this Affair “ a full Consideration.” I must own myself not a little surprized, that any Person should make Application for this Bill being brought into your House, before Points so absolutely necessary

necessary for carrying on the Trade proposed by it, had been first obtained from the Courts, both of *Russia* and *Persia*: And as there is no Law wanting, to introduce the Woollen Manufactures into *Persia* through *Russia*; and as the *Russia* Traders themselves have acknowledged, “ that they may be sold “ for Gold Ducats, and other Species of Money in *Persia* ;” therefore this is a further Confirmation to me, that the passing this Bill, will occasion the Importation into this Kingdom, of very great Quantities of Raw Silk, and other *Persian* Commodities, purchased with Money, not with the Manufactures of *Great Britain*.

But, Sir, however practicable, or secure it may be, to bring Raw Silk, which is a light Commodity, from *Persia*, the carrying of our Woollen, and other Goods, which are bulky Commodities to that Kingdom, cannot be equally as practicable or secure; and I am sure you will agree with me, that the Trade proposed, will be attended with great Risque to those who are engaged in it; and that only such Persons can engage therein, who are Owners of very large capital Stocks, when you are reminded, “ That “ these Merchants must run a Risque, not “ only of the Goods which they shall send “ through the Empire of *Russia*, both by “ Land and Water, to the Places of Mart “ in

“ in *Persia* ; but also of the Raw Silk, and  
 “ other Commodities they may purchase, in  
 “ Return to *Petersburgh*, and from thence  
 “ to this Kingdom.”

This, Sir, is not the Case of the Traders to *Turkey*, they run no risque, either of the Goods they export thither, or those they import from thence, further than to and from the Ports or Places of their respective Factories: Nor are they subject to the Rapaciousness of Governors, by reason they sell their Goods at such Factories, to the *Turks*, *Persians*, *Armenians*, and other Persons trading into *Persia*, and by Treaties between the Crown of *Great Britain*, and the *Grand Seignior*, not only their Tariff is settled, but many other valuable Privileges are enjoyed by them, both for the Security of themselves and their Effects.

But, Sir, to evince that this Bill, permitting the *British* Subjects to carry on a Trade, to and from *Persia* through *Russia*, should not pass into a Law, I beg leave to offer to your Consideration the Authority of Mr *De Witt*, who in his Book of the Interest of *Holland*, expresses himself in the following Words: “ But in all Events it would  
 “ be needful, for the greater Improvement  
 “ of the Navigation of *Holland*, that all foreign imported Goods should be less charged, than those that come in by Land:

G

“ Whereas,



“ Whereas, on the contrary, we see daily,  
 “ that very many *Levant, Italian, &c.* fine  
 “ Wares are brought in by Land-Carriage.  
 “ And how much it concerns our Inhabi-  
 “ tants, we may easily imagine, when we  
 “ consider that the Ships built here, are sent  
 “ to Sea victualled and manned; but the  
 “ Carriers and their Waggon are foreign,  
 “ and of no Concern to us: And besides,  
 “ our Merchandize on board Ships is always  
 “ in our Power; or at least, we may con-  
 “ voy and defend them with our Men of  
 “ War as they go and come; whereas those  
 “ which go by Land Carriage, are in the  
 “ Lands and Power of other Princes; so  
 “ that they may at all Times make Seizure  
 “ of them.”

The Act of Navigation was owing to this  
 Principle of Mr *De Witt's*; in regard of  
 which Law, Sir *Josiah Child* expresses him-  
 self in this manner: “ For my own Part, I  
 “ am of Opinion, that, in relation to *Trade,*  
 “ Shipping, *Profit,* and Power, it is one of  
 “ the choicest, and most prudent Acts that  
 “ ever was made in *England,* and without  
 “ which, we had not now been Owners of  
 “ one Half the Shipping, nor Trade, nor  
 “ employed one Half the Seamen we do at  
 “ present.”—And as to this very Principle  
 it was owing, that Encouragement was gi-  
 ven, both in the Reigns of King *Charles* the  
 Second,

Second, and King *William* the Third, for the building good and defensible Ships, which are only made use of in the *Turkey* Trade ;— so I hope this very same Principle, will induce the House of Commons not only not to pass this Bill, but to be very careful at all Times, of doing any thing, or passing any Law, which may weaken and enervate a Law, that has been of such publick Utility, and given such great Encouragement to the Exportation of the Product and Manufactures of this Kingdom ; and I am willing to flatter myself, if the Season is ripe for it, that your House will lose no Time, in giving to the Merchants of *Great Britain* Encouragement, for the building in this Kingdom, good sailing, as well as defensible Ships ; however, such Encouragement not to be given, in proportion to the Quantities of foreign Commodities imported ; but in proportion to the Quantity of the Product and Manufactures of this Kingdom exported.

As this Observation of Mr *DeWitt*'s is a very just one, I believe, Sir, you will agree with me, that those who may be concerned in Traffick carried on to so distant a Country as *Persia*, through another great Country, very remote also from this Kingdom, ought to be apprehensive that any Injuries they may receive in carrying on their Traffick will hardly ever meet with Redress ; because those

who should obtain it for them, are always unwilling to come to an open Breach with any foreign Powers, for the Loss or Damage of a few Individuals; but rather chuse to endeavour the redressing such Injuries by Negotiation, which, besides being tedious and expensive, seldom brings Reparation to the Sufferers.

This, Sir, brings me to observe, that the Merchants, in carrying on their Trade to *Turkey*, have to do with *one Power only*, and with the respective Governors only of the Provinces in which their Factors reside; whereas, the Merchants carrying on a Trade to and from *Persia* through *Russia*, will have to do not only with two Powers, but with the Governors of many Provinces in both Empires: And, as I believe, you will hardly think it possible for *Great Britain* to right itself, on Account of any Injuries, which its Subjects may receive in *Persia*; so I conceive you will think it much more difficult for *Great Britain* to get any Satisfaction, for any Injury offered by the *Russian* Government to its Subjects, than from any of the Governors in the *Grand Seignior's* Dominions. The *Turks* are not ignorant of the Strength and Power of *Great Britain*; but this perhaps is not so much known by the Subjects of *Russia*, how well soever it may be known by the Court of *Russia*; at least it is certain, this is not at all known by the Subjects of *Persia*, if  
by

by the Court of *Persia*: And there are always at *Constantinople*, besides an Ambassador from *Great Britain*, other Christian Ministers, who, in case of an Injury, are ready to represent, and to afford their Assistance in procuring Redress, which though probably may at some Periods of Time, be the Case at the Court of *Russia*, will hardly ever be the Case at the Court of *Persia*.

Besides, Sir, the *Grand Seignior* and his Ministers know that *Great Britain*, in Case of any Wrong, or Injury done their Merchants, is in a Condition to right itself by its Fleet, which they are sensible can make Captures of the *Turkish* Ships and Vessels, lay waste their Coasts, and even insult the Imperial City.——But, whatever *Great Britain* may be able to do, with respect to the Ships, or Sea Ports of *Russia*, this is not possible to be done against *Persia*: And therefore, were the Privileges and Regulations, declared so absolutely necessary for the carrying on this Trade, to and from *Persia* through *Russia*, obtained from both these Empires; nay, were they much more favourable, than any that may have yet been granted, or even asked for, it would still be of very little Consideration: For, as the Writer of the last Age observes,—“ As Contracts would be vain and ineffectual, where  
“ no Law could be had; so a Treaty of  
“ Commerce

“ Commerce and Alliance would be absurd  
 “ and fruitless between Princes, who, in  
 “ Case of a Breach, are so distant, that  
 “ they cannot make war the one upon the  
 “ other.” And it is my fixed Opinion, Sir,  
 that there is an End of this Trade, in case,  
 either *Great Britain* should have any Difference  
 with *Russia*, or the Government of  
*Russia* should quarrel with the *Persian* :  
 Whereas, though we have had not a few  
 Differences, and almost come to an open  
 Rupture with *Russia* ; yet, we never hitherto  
 have had any Dispute or Rupture  
 with the *Turks*, and never can have  
 any ; unless we are the Instruments of  
 turning a Channel of Trade, now carried  
 on through their Country to another ;  
 and thereby, so incense the *Grand Seignior*,  
 as to give him cause to curtail the Privileges  
 of the *British* Traders, and enlarge  
 those of other Nations ; nor lose that  
 Branch of Traffick, of selling to the *Armenians*,  
 &c. at our Factories in *Turkey*, our  
 Woollen Cloths in Exchange for *Persian*  
 Raw Silk, unless during any Rupture  
 between the *Turks* and *Persians*.

These Considerations, Sir, I conceive,  
 clearly demonstrate, that the carrying on a  
 Trade by the Subjects of *Great Britain*, to  
 and from *Persia* through *Russia*, with the  
 Woollen, and other Manufactures of this  
 Kingdom,



Kingdom, in Exchange for Raw Silk, and other the Commodities of *Persia*,—must be attended with almost insuperable Difficulties.—That there can be no Certainty of its being lasting;—and that the Proprietors of the Goods sent, must run such a Risque, as scarce any Profit will be able to countervail.

But, Sir, I perceive, by what you inform me in your Letter, that those who solicit the passing this Bill, are, in this so important a Question, only regarding themselves, not the Nation; otherwise it had not been possible for them to have made the Declaration you mention, *viz.* “ That if, after the  
 “ enacting of this Law, the proposed Trade  
 “ shall be found, neither practicable nor profitable;  
 “ that then the *Russia* Merchants  
 “ will not continue it: and that at the same  
 “ Time no Harm will be done.” Indeed, Sir, if this Bill were only a Key for the opening a Trade, to a Country, whither not any of the *British* Subjects had ever before traded, or our Woollen, and other Goods, had never been before introduced;—then this had been a proper Declaration enough; but I apprehend you will look upon it, as a very improper one, when you shall recollect, that all the Papers which the *Russia* Traders have produced, plainly shew, that what they ask is not a new Branch of Trade, but only an Alteration, or turning of a  
 Channel

Channel of Trade, now carried through *Turkey*, in order to be carried through *Russia*.

I wish Gentlemen would carefully consider, what must be the Consequence to the Nation of losing the Trade to *Turkey*, if the Traders to *Russia* should decline sending thro' that Country to *Persia*, the Woollen, and other the Manufactures of this Kingdom, whenever they may not find it, either practicable or profitable; and yet at the same Time that this Bill, if passed into a Law, shall remain in full Force, as to the Liberty of importing Raw Silk, and other the *Persia* Commodities, from *Russia* into *Great Britain*.—And, Sir, as I cannot think, but that, whenever this Trade shall be opened, great Quantities of Raw Silk, of the Growth of *Persia*, and probably of some other *Eastern* Countries, will be imported from *Russia* into this Kingdom, not purchased with the Manufactures of *Great Britain*, but only with Money; so I am under no little Apprehension, that were there a Clause in this Bill, (which there is not at present, and it was possible to carry it into Execution) “ That  
 “ no Raw Silk, or any other Commodity,  
 “ of the Growth, Produce, or Manufacture  
 “ of *Persia*, should be imported into this  
 “ Kingdom, but what should be in Return  
 “ of

“ of the Product and Manufactures of this Kingdom,” the Government of *Great Britain* would be under a very great Difficulty of acting, in a political Sense, with the Government of *Russia*, provided that Court should insist upon a Liberty of their Subjects importing Raw Silk, and other the Commodities of *Persia*, from the Dominions of *Russia* into this Kingdom; though neither the whole, or any Part, in Return of the Manufactures of *Great Britain*.

Therefore, Sir, I conceive this a Matter, highly deserving the Consideration of Parliament; and, as there are already so very great Quantities of Raw and Thrown Silk, imported into this Kingdom, and paid for only with Money; whether the Money so paid, does not amount to a greater Value than the Amount of the Value of the manufactured Silks, exported to all Countries, exclusive of the *British* Plantations in *America*.

I own, Sir, I cannot think the Persons who made this Declaration, were even serious on the Occasion, or could possibly imagine no Harm could attend the Publick; when, by means of this Bill, one Set of Men shall have taken their Stock out of Trade, and those to whom such Trade may be transferred, shall immediately drop it, as soon as they find it, neither so practicable or profit-

H

able

able as they flattered themselves, Such a Declaration calls upon you, and every other Gentleman of your House, to give this Matter a very full and particular Consideration ; for surely, it is of the utmost Concern to the Nation, to preserve a known and experienced Trade, and a Trade which is, as I have before manifested, even at this Time, so very valuable to the Kingdom, before you pass a Law, which will inevitably be the Loss of it.

This leads me, Sir, to observe, That no Sum of Money employed in this Trade for a few Years, can make the Nation amends for the Loss of the Trade to *Turkey*; the Traders to which Country, it cannot be supposed, will, after the passing this Bill, continue their Stock in a Traffick they will be in so great a Danger of losing, sooner or later; and at the same Time, of being ruined by the Loss of it: That, it is not the giving Encouragement to a few Merchants, to carry on a Commerce at Random, and in an uncertain Manner; but only a large Stock of Money flowing in every Channel of Trade, with a constant and continued Course, can enrich *Great Britain*: And That Experience has shewn, by numberless Instances, in this last Century, to the great Loss of this Kingdom, that whenever a great  
Stock

Stock of Money has been employed in any particular Branches of Commerce, and afterwards taken out of them; it is not so easy a Matter to bring back an equal Quantity, or almost any Stock of Money, into such Trades again.

Therefore, Sir, upon these Considerations, I submit, whether you, and other Gentlemen, ought not to be strictly careful, how you go about to divert, by a Bill of this Kind, the present Channel of Trade, to and from *Persia* through *Turkey*; to which Country the Trade carried on at this Time is so very valuable to the Nation, either upon Supposition, or in bare Expectation, of enlarging the Export of our Woollen, and other Manufactures; more especially, when this Nation has, in several Instances, so fatally experienced, by such Bills being enacted into Laws, that very considerable Branches of its Commerce have been lost; and, notwithstanding the utmost Endeavours have been used, and the greatest Encouragements given by the Legislature, such Trades have never been able to be retrieved.—Many Instances I could point out; but Two I believe will be sufficient for your Satisfaction:—The one was a Law, that occasioned the Loss of the Exportation of our Woollen Manufacture to



*Flanders* ; and the other, of the *Greenland Trade* : The first was to gratify a Town in *Great Britain*, and the other to gratify one or more great trading City, or Cities abroad.

You will be pleased, Sir, to observe, that the *Russia Company*, in their Petition set forth, “ That the opening of a Trade to  
 “ and from *Persia* through *Russia*, will be at-  
 “ tended with many advantageous Conse-  
 “ quences to this Kingdom, as it will con-  
 “ sist principally, if not wholly, in the Ex-  
 “ portation of our Woollen Goods, and Im-  
 “ portation of Raw Silk, much cheaper than  
 “ in any other Channel of Trade ; and  
 “ that *Persian Silk* is risen very considerably  
 “ since the War with *Spain* ; and the Price  
 “ must always, upon any Rupture, either  
 “ with *France* or *Spain*, greatly advance ;  
 “ which can only be remedied by opening  
 “ the Trade, and thereby having the Choice  
 “ of two Ways to supply this Kingdom  
 “ with this Commodity.”

Now, Sir, I am willing to flatter myself, that I have given you entire Satisfaction, that the opening of this Trade, will be so far from being attended, with many advantageous Consequences to this Kingdom ; that many disadvantageous ones will arise to it, from the enacting the Bill now depending in your House, into a Law ; and that Raw  
 Silk

Silk will not be purchased in *Persia*, principally with the Woollen Manufactures of this Kingdom, but principally with Money; which if it shall be, then indeed it is admitted, Raw Silk may be imported into this Kingdom from *Russia*, much cheaper than in any other Channel;—otherwise, Issue is ready to be joined in this Question, whenever the *Russia* Gentlemen shall be pleased to ascertain the whole Expence of the Conveyance of any Number of Cloths from this Kingdom, through *Russia* to *Persia*, with the Cost of such Cloths on board of Ship; together with the Charge of Conveyance of any Quantity of Raw Silk from *Persia*, and the Price of selling such Silk in this Kingdom.

I am informed, it is true, “ That *Persia* “ Silk has risen since the War with *Spain* ;” but, at the same Time, “ That all Sorts “ of Raw and Thrown Silks have risen, equally as much or more in proportion :” And this I am assured, the Committee was acquainted by a Gentleman, than whom there is no Person more knowing in the Silk Trade, and the Price of Silk of every Denomination, and of every Country. It is not improbable, but that Raw Silk, as well as Thrown, may advance, upon a War with either *France* or *Spain* ; but yet, for many  
Reasons

Reasons that may be given, there is a greater Probability that it will not advance. — However, admitting this was to be the Case, I am very sure, this Matter may be answered much more effectually than by opening this Trade; and that is either, by granting the *Turkey* Company Convoys once a Year, and the *Italian* Merchants twice, or more a Year; and by keeping a Number of proper Ships cruizing on the Coasts of *France* and *Italy*, as well to annoy the Enemy in the *Mediterranean*, as to protect our Navigation in that Sea, and other Parts. — But, if this should not prove effectual, then Liberty might be given, to import Raw and Thrown Silk from every Country, supposing it a good Reason, which is laid down by the *Russia* Company, for asking this Bill, viz. “Be-  
 “ cause they can bring Raw Silk from *Rus-*  
 “ *sia*, much cheaper than in any other  
 “ Channel of Trade.” — But however, I cannot think the Legislature will do a Thing, which they prevented by an Act of the 6th of his late Majesty, (entitled, “ An Act for prohibiting the Importation of Raw Silk, and  
 “ Mohair-Yarn, of the Product or Manufacture of *Asia*, from any Ports or Places,  
 “ in the *Streights*, or *Levant* Seas; except  
 “ such Ports and Places, as are within the  
 “ Dominions of the *Grand Seignior*:”) The  
 Preamble

Preamble of which runs in these Words;  
 “ And whereas, at the Time of the passing  
 “ the said recited Act, the Subjects of *France*  
 “ exported very little Woollen Manufacture  
 “ into *Turkey*, and were then supplied with  
 “ great Quantities of Woollen Goods from  
 “ *England*, for their own Use ; and likewise  
 “ Raw Silks, and other Goods of *Turkey*,  
 “ which were the Returns of *English* Wool-  
 “ len Manufactures ; for all which, the Im-  
 “ portation into *France*, was then free for  
 “ the Subjects of *England*: And whereas,  
 “ the Woollen Manufacture in *France*, has  
 “ since that Time, been greatly increased,  
 “ and very large Quantities of such Goods  
 “ are now annually imported from thence to  
 “ *Turkey*, in return whereof they bring  
 “ from thence Raw Silk, and other Com-  
 “ modities, to *Marseilles*, and other Parts in  
 “ *France* ; great Quantities whereof are car-  
 “ ried into *Italy*, and from thence imported  
 “ into *Great Britain*, in *English* Shipping,  
 “ greatly to the Discouragement of the  
 “ Woollen Manufactures of *Great Britain*,  
 “ and the Advancement thereof in *France*;  
 “ and without some speedy Care therein, the  
 “ *British* Trade to *Turkey* will be daily les-  
 “ sened, and is in danger of being entirely  
 “ lost.”

This

This Law put a Stop to the Importation into this Kingdom, by Way of *Leghorn*, of of upwards of 600 Bales of Silk of a Year purchased with *French* Woollen Cloths in *Turkey*; and for which the *French* received Money at *Leghorn*.——And if the Reason be a good one, which is assigned by the *Russia* Company, for the Repeal of so much of the Act of Navigation, as to give them Liberty to import Raw Silk, from *Russia* into this Kingdom ; certainly, it will be equally as sufficient a Reason, to repeal the abovementioned Act of the 6th of the late King; nay, even to allow the Importation of Raw Silk from all Countries whatsoever.——But, I hope never to see the Act of Navigation so weakened, unless it is first known by Experience, that every Country, from whence Raw Silk can be imported, has annually taken off great Quantities of the Product and Manufacture of this Kingdom ; or, will, after such a Liberty is granted, take off an additional Value, to the Amount of the Silk purchased there.

But, Sir, how *Great Britain* is to be supplied with Silk two Ways, cheaper than one, I cannot see ; especially in Exchange for our Woollen Goods ; unless the Traders, both to *Turkey* and *Russia*, are determined to carry on their respective Trafficks, though they prove never so disadvantageous to them.——

This



This, Sir, the *Russia* Merchants have declared they will not do ; and I am ready to imagine the *Turkey* Merchants will be prudent enough to act in like Manner.

I can easily perceive, that by this Kingdom being supplied from different Countries, with any particular Commodity ; such Commodity will become cheaper to the Consumer ; but am perfectly at a Loss how to conceive, that one Set of *British* Merchants, trading to *Persia* through *Russia*, and another Set, to *Persia* through *Turkey*, with our Woollen Manufactures, can possibly be the Means of our purchasing *Persia* Raw Silk, as cheap as if there was but one Body of Traders to that Country only : For, when Traders to any one particular Country, are either Rivals, or offer Goods to Sale, one against another, through different Channels, the Consequence must be, that the Inhabitants of such Country, will not only purchase the Manufactures of this Kingdom much cheaper ; but at the same Time, will also sell their own Commodities much dearer ;——and this will be the Case, in a greater Degree, when the Goods sent, as well through *Turkey*, as through *Russia* to *Persia*, are chiefly to be exchanged for Raw Silk ; because this is a Method of Traffick, which will necessarily depreciate the Price of the *British* Manufactures, and advance that of Raw Silk

in *Persia*;—so that I am of Opinion there is nothing can make the Nation amends by the carrying on such a Trade; but it's selling a much greater Quantity of it's Manufactures, and importing a much greater Quantity of Raw Silk; and that such greater Importation be the Consequence of lowering the Price of Silk to the Manufacturers, so as to occasion a larger Exportation of the Silken Manufactures, to Countries not under the Dominions of the Crown of *Great Britain*.

However, Sir, I believe you will agree with me, That the *Russia* Traders are not serious in saying, “*That, by opening this Trade, there will be a Choice of two Ways to supply this Kingdom with Raw Silk,*” when you recollect, that besides their declaring, in their Petition “*That the Importation of Raw Silk, will be cheaper in the Channel of Trade through Russia, than in any other Channel of Trade:*” It is declared in Paper B, “*That the Russia Company will be able to invest their Returns to Great Britain in the best Raw Silk, near 50 per Cent. cheaper than at present, by the Way of Turkey. That the Schach's principal Merchants denied to all the Turks and Armenians, which came from Turkey, any last Year's Silk, unless at an advanced Price of 20 per Cent. And that, if the*  
*“ Turks*

“ *Turks* and *Armenians* shall be denied the  
 “ Exportation of *Gilan* Silks by the Way  
 “ of *Turkey*; or be obliged to purchase them  
 “ upon such unequal Terms, little or no  
 “ Silk will be imported by the *Turkey* Com-  
 “ pany.”

Thus, Sir, I have troubled you with my Thoughts, in relation to the Bill depending in your House, for opening a Trade to and from *Persia* through *Russia*; to which I could have added many other Things, proper for your Consideration, both of a political, as well as mercantile Nature; but having already taken up too much of your Time, I shall defer mentioning them, until I have the the Honour of seeing you, and in the mean time am, with Respect,

S I R,

*Kensington,*  
*Jan. 13, 1740.*

*Your most humble Servant.*

E R R A T A.

PAGE 22. Line 4. for *Purport* read *Purpose*. p. 37.  
 l. 26. for *Manufatures*, read *Manufacturers*.  
 p. 53. l. 28. for *the* read *a*. p. 64. l. 3. dele of.

[illegible][illegible]

... ..

6-11

